

support Price for Potato

2879. SHRI SATISH PRADHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) what is Government's response to Punjab and UP farmers' demands for the minimum support prices for their bumper potato crop; and
- (b) the details of the steps taken or proposed to be taken in this regard by resolving the potato crisis?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) On the formal request of the State Governments, Government of India is implementing Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of horticultural items of importance including potato, price of which tend to fall below economic level and the farmers are put to distress sales due to bumper crop. Proposal from Government of Punjab has been received for implementation of Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for potato to provide price support to the farmers which is under consideration. No such proposal has been received from Government of Uttar Pradesh.

Crashing of Coconut Prices in Goa, Karnataka and Kerala

2880. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether Government are aware that coconut prices in Goa, Karnataka and Kerala have crashed dramatically causing panic amongst the growers of the States;
- (b) if so, the reasons therefor; and
- (c) what steps Government have taken or propose to take to protect interests of the growers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) and (b) The market prices of copra have been subdued during 2000-2001

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season due to several reasons, including increased availability of edible oils and low consumption pattern of coconut oil.

(c) To protect the interest of the copra growers, the Government is undertaking Price Support Operations through National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd. (NAFED). Till mid March, 2001, NAFED had procured a total quantity of 2.20 lakh tonnes of Milling Copra, with the share of Kerala being 81028 tonnes and Goa being 430 tonnes. As regard Ball copra, a total quantity of 4063 tonnes have been procured, the share of Karnataka being 4060 tonnes over the same period. The Government is also using the instruments of trade policy to protect the interest of domestic cultivators.

Purchase of Computers by ICAR

2881. SHRI A. VIJAYA RAGHAVAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a corrigendum, regarding ICB II of NATP(ARIS) advertisement for purchase of computer peripherals worth Rs. 34 crores was issued by the Indian Council of Agriculture Research in January, 2001;

(b) if so, whether the term of the official of the ICAR, who pinpointed the loss of about Rs. 5 crores and technology damage to the country due to above advertisement was terminated with immediate effect in the month of January, 2001 itself; and

(c) if so, the details of the action taken to rectify the position?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. DEBENDRA PRADHAN): (a) Yes, Sir. However the estimated value is not Rs. 34 crores, but is Rs. 19.8 crores.

(b) and (c) No, Sir, there was no loss. Taking into consideration his performance, the officer was reverted.